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ABSTRACT

Project STAR (Elementary) in the Cleveland Public Schools is designed to improve reading and vocabulary skills for grades 4-6 by providing 2,700 selected students with daily 40-minute sessions in STAR Learning Centers in 42 elementary schools. Eight to twelve students at a time use an individualized, self-pacing audio approach to remedial reading instruction. This final evaluation report for 1982-83 shows that the project appears to have been implemented effectively, but, while there were student achievement gains, they did not meet the pre-post test criterion. (CMG)

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PROJECT STAR (ELEMENTARY)

ECIA CHAPTER 1

1982-83
FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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UD023257

Cleveland Public Schools

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS DEPARTMENT

August, 1983

PROJECT STAR

1982-1983 Chapter 1 Final Evaluation

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

Project STAR (Skills Training for Achievement in Reading) is designed to improve pupil's achievement in reading comprehension and vocabulary skills. Approximately 2,700 selected students in 42 elementary schools were served daily in a STAR Learning Center. Selected students are scheduled into the Learning Center (from their regular classes) for a 40 minute session each day. Eight to twelve students at a time use an individualized, self-pacing audio approach to remedial reading instruction, with emphasis on reading comprehension and vocabulary skills.

SERVICE SUMMARY

Pupils Served: 2,700 Grades Served: 4-6 Years in Operation: 1*

Schools:		Staffing:	
38	public	1	project manager, PT
4	non-public	2	Consultant Teachers, FT
42	total	42	Lab Teachers, FT.
(See list in Appendix)		2	Clerks, FT
		1	Visiting Teacher, FT

*This is the first year of elementary level implementation of Project STAR after 15 years of secondary implementation.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Four process objectives concerning the project's implementation in 42 elementary schools were achieved: New Century Learning Centers were installed in project schools; students were selected and enrolled; and the prescribed record keeping procedures were implemented by October 1, 1982, and continued throughout the academic year.

The single product objective was not attained. STAR students did demonstrate gains of 2.70 and 5.18 respectively on pre-to-post NCE scores for Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test reading comprehension and auditory vocabulary representing accelerated progress. However, the objective level of 7 NCE's was not attained.

. Process Objective 1: By October 1, 1982, pupils with reading deficiencies who have met program selection criteria will have been identified and placed in operational STAR Center's/classes.

. Outcome: Process objective 1 has been achieved.

Evidence to support this conclusion was compiled from data gathered via project site visitations, including individual Learning Center teacher interviews. Also, project records were inspected to ascertain Project STAR students' enrollment and their corresponding qualifying scores. The following findings were noted:

— 34 Learning Centers were fully functioning by October 1, 1982. Equipment and materials were in place; teachers and students were trained and identified for Project STAR. (See Appendix A for a list of Learning Center Sites.) Four additional learning centers were established (October 15, 25, and November 29 respectively) at A.J. Rickoff, Garfield, Forest Hill Parkway and Euclid Park schools. These delayed starts were primarily due to classroom modifications required to accommodate equipment for the learning center and the delayed appointment of teachers for the project.

Also, Learning Centers were established by October 1,1982, in four non-public schools designed to serve approximately 140 students.

— Students enrolled in the Leaning Centers were identified by their performance on the CTBS Reading Comprehension Subtest. Two administrations of this test (original in Spring, 1982, and make-up in Fall, 1982) provided scores for student screening for Project STAR. By June, 1983, 2553 public school students were enrolled with eligible test scores (at or below the thirty-third percentile rank on the CTBS Reading Comprehension Subtest). Student lists, completed with the eligible qualifying test scores, were on file for all enrolled students. Also, 154 students were reported enrolled in the four non-public Learning Centers in grades 5 through 8.

. Process Objective 2: All STAR Centers will contain a variety of appropriate equipment/materials that are designed to meet a wide range of reading needs.

. Outcome: Process objective 2 has been attained:

Thirty-eight Project STAR public elementary Learning Centers were visited to ascertain the extent of the equipment and materials diversification existing in the Centers. Each of the Centers

TABLE 1

Project STAR (Elementary)
Inservice Sessions

DATE(S)	TOPIC(S)	NUMBER ATTENDING
09-07-82	Orientation for teacher trainers—3 experienced New Century Learning Center Teachers	3*
09-10-82 09-13-82 09-14-82 09-15-82	Pre-service training for the 32 new elementary New Century Learning Center (STAR) teachers including orientation and on-site training	32*
10-22-82	Lesson Demonstration for STAR teachers Special Education (IEP) impact for STAR classes	38
11-17-82	Myer-Briggs Type Indicator	38
01-26-83	Competency Testing	38
03-03-83	Parent Liaison Services	38
06-13-83	Closing Procedures	38

* Conducted by New Century, Incorporated.

. Product Objective: Project STAR participants will evidence a mean gain of at least seven NCE's in test scores as reflected by pre/post Stanford Diagnostic Reading (SDRT) scores in (a) auditory vocabulary and (b) total reading comprehension.

. Outcome: This objective has not been attained.

During September and December, 1982, STAR students were administered the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test for pre-test database compilation. (A second administration of the pre-test was necessary to balance STAR Center enrollments during the Fall.) Project Students were again tested during April, 1983 to provide post-test data required for auditory vocabulary and comprehension subtest analysis. The results and discussion follow:

. Process Objective 3: A diagnostic-prescriptive plan will be generated for each pupil served by the project, and will be periodically updated according to individual pupil progress.

. Outcome: This objective has been attained.

Center teachers maintain an elaborate record keeping system for each student assigned to the Center.

The New Century curriculum requires that student progress be charted daily via two vehicles, the Progress Plotter and the Weekly Center Report (See Appendix C). As each lesson unit is completed by the student and checked by the teacher, an entry is made in both records which, completed, serve to document the student's progress and specify which lesson unit the student should begin next. The Progress Plotter is the student's individual work folder, which provides storage for work in progress and indicates lessons the student has completed, the achievement level for each lesson, and a prescription to progress or repeat. The Weekly Center Report chronicles student progress through unit/lesson/program performance. Teachers document and review each student's weekly progress prior to the weekly submission of the Center Reports to the project office. The nature of the prescribed curriculum progress provides a "built-in" diagnostic plan based upon the student's performance as it directs the student to the next lesson.

The submission of the Weekly Center Reports and the evidence of the Progress Plotters in all of the STAR Centers documents the attainment of this objective.

. Process Objective 4: Differentiated inservice meetings will be scheduled for instructional personnel.

. Outcome: Process objective 4 has been attained.

Project management reports including meeting notices, agendas and attendance data indicated that the following inservice activities were conducted during the academic year.

possess a variety of appropriate equipment and materials which are designed to meet a wide range of reading needs. New Century Reading Learning Centers have been installed at all Project STAR sites. The Centers contain the following materials and equipment, as prescribed by the Operations Manual:[1]

1. Eight or twelve student study carrels;

2. Tables and/or shelves for the display of curriculum materials (i.e., cassette tapes, worksheets, and workbooks);

3. One interest center which contains additional materials for use by the students as part of the progress award system.

The curriculum which comprises the New Century Reading Center contains student exercises which are designed to progress from reading readiness skills to beginning reading skills to comprehension skills. Core programs introduce and develop fundamental skills. The available materials address the wide range of reading needs as prescribed in the objective; skill levels for kindergarten through twelfth grade are represented, while the scope encompasses readiness, comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, usage, and advanced reading skills development. (See Appendix B for the Scope and Sequence Chart of the New Century Reading Learning Center.) The supply of material and maintenance of equipment in the Learning Centers is a function of the New Century Education Corporation. Six employees of the company service the STAR Learning Centers from the Cleveland Office. Specialized employees attend to the ongoing order of supplies while others attend to the maintenance of equipment on a weekly basis.

Interviews with 37 STAR teachers during January and February, 1983, yielded information which affirmed the adequacy of the materials supply and equipment maintenance system. Thirty-one teachers indicated that they experienced no significant problems with materials, equipment, or the supply of maintenance. Three teachers indicated that they experienced minor problems during the first semester due to delayed or cancelled material orders. Three teachers indicated that they detected misprinted worksheets, causing them to be wary of the materials. Only one teacher reported problems with the equipment or tapes.

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[1] Operations Manual for the Reading Learning Centers, New Century Education Corporation, 1980, Chapter 8.

TABLE 2
Project STAR Elementary
Auditory Vocabulary Pre-Post Test Results

SDRT TEST	P/N* SCHOOL	GRADE	N	MEAN Pre-Test (NCE)	MEAN Post-test (NCE)	MEAN NCE Gain	% Gaining 7 NCE's
A	P	5	103	31.6	36.6	5.0	50.0
A	P	6	1200	32.0	34.5	2.5	36.0

*Auditory Vocabulary data for the non-public students was not available for analysis.

The pre-post subtest results for auditory vocabulary indicated that, although STAR students do demonstrate an accelerated progress rate (indicated by any NCE gain greater than zero) they did not meet the gain level proposed in the objective (7.0 NCE's). Grade five pupils evidenced higher mean NCE gains by a greater subpopulation than those in grade six.

TABLE 3
Project STAR Elementary
Reading Comprehension Pre-Post Test Results

SDRT TEST FORM	P/N* SCHOOL	GRADE	N	MEAN PRE-TEST (NCE's)	MEAN POST TEST (NCE)	MEAN GAIN (+-)	% Gaining 7 NCE's
A	P	5	98	26.7	32.2	5.5	44.0
A	P	6	1129	28.6	33.8	5.2	27.0
B	N	5	**	-	-	-	-
B	N	6	5	32.0	27.8	-4.2	
B	N	7	**	-	-	-	-
B	N	8	17	40.7	52.5	11.8	47.1

NOTES: * Public/Nonpublic
** Nonpublic data was unavailable for analysis at these grade levels due to the inability to match pre and post test scores.

Test results reported for the sample of STAR students indicate that the reading comprehension target gain of 7 NCE'S among project participants has not been attained. The sample included 1227 public and 22 nonpublic students .[2] Public school participants evidenced a comprehension gain of greater than five NCE's at both grade levels. Non public participants in grade eight (N=17) gained over 11 NCE's. Sample sizes of the other nonpublic grades were not large enough to provide reliable data for NCE gain assessment. Despite the failure of project students to attain the desired NCE gain, it should be noted that any gain in NCE scores evidenced by project students represents greater than expected outcomes. NCE scores are normalized and designed to yield identical scores on a pre and post treatment test. Therefore, Project STAR does foster accelerated progress in reading achievement among its participants.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Pupil Attendance

Year end attendance data was reported for Project STAR and non- STAR pupils in the system for 1982-1983.

TABLE 4
STAR and Non STAR Attendance Rates

GRADE	Project STAR		NON-STAR		STAR MINUS Non-STAR
	N	RATE	N	RATE	
5	372	91.0	6100	90.0	1.0
6	1540	90.9	4701	90.4	0.5

The data indicate that STAR students demonstrated a slightly better attendance record that non-STAR students in the same grades. The rate differentials translate into two and one days, respectively, for grades five and six based upon a 180-day academic year.

STAR Parent Survey

At the end of the academic year, parents of Project STAR public elementary students were surveyed via a questionnaire carried home and returned by students (see a copy of the instrument in Appendix D). One hundred ninety seven parents responded.

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[2] A year end bus driver's strike in progress during the post testing week accounts for the fact that only 50% of the participants had valid pre-post test results.

Eighty-two percent of the parent respondents indicated that their child talked about his/her STAR class at school. Eighteen percent responded that their child did not talk about his/her STAR class.

In a similar pattern, 85% and 84% of the parent respondents, respectively, indicated that they were aware that STAR students are removed from regular classes and support this "pull out" arrangement, while 15% and 16% were not aware of and did not support this schedule.

When asked if their children were satisfied with STAR, 75% of the parents indicated that their children "seemed very satisfied";18% were "more or less satisfied" while 7% were undecided. No negative responses were reported.

Concerning their child's reading interest as compared to the previous year, 43% responded that their child was much more interested, 40% were somewhat more interested, 16% had the same interest levels, and 1% were less interested.

CONCLUSIONS

The evidence available at the conclusion of the project year indicates that all of the four process objectives were attained.

- Students were selected for the project using the prescribed selection criteria and were scheduled into the STAR Learning Centers in a timely fashion during September, 1982.
- Learning Centers were installed and equipped with a variety of materials to meet the diverse reading needs of the project students.
- Teachers maintained individual student progress records which satisfied the diagnosis/prescription criteria specified in the objective.
- Differentiated inservice meetings for the project teachers were conducted for all STAR staff regularly during the school year.
- The project's single product objective (evidenced by student reading achievement gain) was not attained. However, the average NCE gains in vocabulary and comprehension demonstrated that accelerated student progress had occurred.

Additionally, Project STAR students were found to demonstrate somewhat better attendance patterns at school than non-STAR students. A parent survey also yielded information which indicated a high degree of awareness of and support for the project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered for project management.

- Although the product objective wasn't attained as stated, the project does evidence accelerated progress in reading achievement. Continuation of the project at the elementary level for a second year would provide additional achievement data for reading progress assessment.

- Project STAR is successful in implementing all of its procedural objectives and should be continued with its present design. Therefore, it is recommended that procedural elements of the project not be considered process objectives in the future. An implementation plan which could be monitored by project management using a self assessment checklist would serve to insure continued operational success.

APPENDIX A

List of STAR Learning Center Sites

PUBLIC

Andrew J. Rickoff
Anthony Wayne
Benjamin Franklin
Buhrer
Case
Charles H. Lake
Daniel E. Morgan
Euclid Park
Forest H. Parkway
Fullerton
Garfield
George W. Carver
Gordon
Halle
Henry W. Longfellow
Kentucky
Margaret Ireland
Marion-Sterling
Mary B. Martin
Mary M. Bethune
McKinley
Memphis
Miles Park
Milford
Mt. Pleasant
Oliver H. Perry
Orchard
Paul Revere
Robert Fulton
Stephen E. Howe
Tremont
Union
Verda Brobst
Wade Park
Walton
Warner
Watterson-Lake
William R. Harper

NON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

St. Stephen
St. Vitus
St. Ignatius
St. Joseph (Collinwood)

VSC SCOPE AND SEQUENCE CHART

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	USE	APPROXIMATE GRADE SKILL LEVELS
LISTEN, MARK, AND SAY (LMS)	READING READINESS: sequence/categorization/incongruity	CORE: lowest starting point in the curriculum, is followed by TTM	
A TRIP TO THE MOON (TTM)	READING READINESS: polarities/degrees of size/presence or absence of a quality	CORE: follows LMS, is followed by C21	
CENTURY 21 (C21)	WORD ATTACK AND EARLY COMPREHENSION SKILLS: sound-symbol correspondence/vowel and consonant patterns/reading sentences, paragraphs, and stories	CORE: follows TTM, is followed by RDA	
CONCEPT BUILDERS (CNB)	CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT: position discrimination/classification/generalization/early math and science	SUPPLEMENTAL: used with C21 Books A-3	
THE ALPHABET BOOK (ABK)	READING READINESS: auditory and visual recognition of letter symbols	CORE: used between C21 Books B and 1	
CODEBUSTER (CDB)	DECODING MASTERY: sound-spelling correspondences/word recognition/linguistic and spelling patterns/root words, endings, and syllable division	CORE: used with C21 for Gr K-6 students, precedes RDA for Gr 7-8 students	
READ ACHIEVER (RDA)	READING COMPREHENSION DEVELOPMENT: main idea, specific detail, sequence, and inference/paragraph meaning/fluency and rate/poetic language	CORE: follows C21 (Gr K-6) or CDB (Gr 7-8), is followed by CRD	
PEOPLE WHO MADE AMERICA GREAT (PMG)	AUDITORY COMPREHENSION DEVELOPMENT: dramatic biographies with comprehension exercises	SUPPLEMENTAL: used with RDA and CRD	
COMPETENCE PLUS (CMP)	APPLICATION OF READING SKILLS TO EVERYDAY LIFE: following directions/reading catalogs, forms, and letters/consumer skills/work skills and job applications/complex forms and documents	CORE: used with RDA Units 3-12	
SPELLBINDER (SPB)	SPELLING MASTERY: spelling pattern drills/commonly misspelled words/critical spelling rules/selected word lists	SUPPLEMENTAL: used with RDA Unit 5 and up	
READING SAMPLER (RDS)	READING PRACTICE AND MOTIVATION: reading selections with comprehension exercises, presenting a variety of literary forms with subject matter chosen to maintain a high interest level	SUPPLEMENTAL: used with RDA Units 7-12, CRD	
CHALLENGE IN READING (CRD)	ADVANCED READING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: meaning in context/fluency, rate, and comprehension/vocabulary building/classification/reading charts, graphs, and diagrams/sequencing	CORE: follows RDA	
BASIC COLLEGE ENGLISH (BCE)	ENGLISH USAGE FUNDAMENTALS: spelling/subject-verb agreement/words frequently misused/commas/pronoun reference/capitals, abbreviations, and end marks/punctuating quotations/using apostrophes	SUPPLEMENTAL: used with CRD	
STUDY SKILLBUILDER (SSK)	AUDITORY COMPREHENSION DEVELOPMENT: basic listening skills/summarizing main idea and supporting points/advanced listening skills/key words/two main ideas, discussion, speeches/simple and detailed note-taking	SUPPLEMENTAL: used with CRD	
ON YOUR OWN (OYO)	SKILL MAINTENANCE: concept development/word attack/reading comprehension/application of reading skills/advanced reading skills	SUPPLEMENTAL: used as homework with C21, CNB, CDB, RDA, CMP, and CRD	

APPENDIX C

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE WEEKLY CENTER REPORT AND THE STUDENT PROGRESS PLOTTER

WEEKLY CENTER REPORT

RECORD AN ENTRY FOR EACH STUDENT EACH DAY, LEAVING NO BLANK SPACES.

KEY
✓ GO ON (POINT) — SA SCHOOL ACTIVITY
O GO ON (NO POINT) — A ABSENT
X REPEAT (NO POINT) — IC INTEREST CENTER
→ CONTINUE LESSON — P STUDENT PROGRESS AWARD

SCHOOL Jefferson TIME 9:00-9:50 TEACHER M. Kane WEEK BEG. MON. 10/21 19 80

#	STUDENT NAME	GR	IC	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	PREV PTS	PT	TTL
1	Beniquez, Nancy	3	P	13 C2 16✓	OYO 67✓ 13 C2 17✓	→	13 C2 18✓ 13 C2 19 O	IC	33	4	37
2	Burgmeier, John	5	P	7RDA 3✓	BCMP 2✓ 7RDA 4✓	OYO 104✓ 1RDS 1 O	SA	7RDA 5✓	37	5	42
3	Cordoba, Emilio	5		PMG-13✓ 5RDA 12✓	OYO 97✓ 1CMP 4✓	6RDP 1✓ ACMP 12 O	6RDA 2✓ SPB PT 33✓-3	A	36	7	43
4	Daniels, Sue	3		C2 1 PT 1✓-1 C2 1 PT 2✓-2	C2 1 PT 3✓-7	4C2 1 1✓	4C2 1 2 O	4C2 1 3✓	3	5	8
5	Fogel, Gary	7		→	BCE 3✓✓	SA	3CRD 4✓	3CRD 5 O ✓ 5RDS 5	53	5	58
6	Harrison, John	5		SPB 56✓	7RDA 4✓	OYO 103✓ 7RDA 5 O	7RDA 6✗	7RDA 6✓	42	4	(46)

A SEGMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS PLOTTER

READ ACHIEVER (RDA) and COMPETENCE PLUS (CMP) with ON YOUR OWN (OYO)						Test 1 9/11-5✓CE	Tes
PMG 1	RDA 1-1 9/12-3✓CE	RDA 1-2 9/13-3 O CE	RDA 1-3 9/14-5 O CE	RDA 1-4 9/17-2✓CE	OYO 76 9/18-5✓CE	RDA 1-5 9/18-4✓CE	RDA 1-6 9/19-4 O CE	R
RDA 1-10 ~~9/25-14✓CE~~ 9/26-8✓CE	OYO 78 9/26-7✓CE	RDA 1-11 9/27-4✓CE	RDA 1-12	OYO 79	2	RDA 2-1	RDA 2-2	F
RDA 2-5	CMP A-2	RDA 2-6	RDA 2-7	OYO 81	RDA 2-8	CMP A-3	RDA 2-9	

no text

A complete explanation of specific entry codes for both documents is contained on the Operations Manual

APPENDIX D

CLEVELAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Research and Analysis Department
May, 1983

Dear Parent:

We are currently developing plans for next year's Project STAR program. You can help us in this planning by responding to the questions appearing below. Your response to these questions should be based upon the kind of experiences your son or daughter has had during the current school year. Please answer the questions according to how you honestly feel about them.

WHEN YOU COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE HAVE YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER RETURN IT TO HIS OR HER PROJECT STAR TEACHER.

Thank you for your cooperation

(INDICATE YOUR RESPONSE BY CIRCLING THE LETTER WHICH MOST CLOSELY CORRESPONDS TO YOUR HONEST FEELING)

1. Has your child talked to you about his/her STAR class this year?

   a. Yes

   b. No

2. How did your child seem to feel about his/her STAR class during the school year?

   a. Seemed very satisfied

   b. Seemed more or less satisfied

   c. Undecided

   d. Seemed more or less dissatisfied

   e. Seemed very dissatisfied

3. Comparing this year to last year, my child seems to:

   a. be very interested in reading

   b. be somewhat interested in reading

   c. have about the same interest in reading

   d. be somewhat less interested in reading

   e. be very uninterested in reading

4. Comparing this year to last year, I feel my child is doing:

   a. much better in reading

   b. somewhat better in reading

   c. about the same in reading

   d. somewhat worse in reading

   e. much worse in reading

5. Do you know that your child is removed from his/her regular class for Project STAR class?

   a. Yes

   b. No

6. Are you in favor of this "pull out" arrangement?

   a. Yes

   b. No

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING THE STAR PROJECT WOULD BE HELPFUL!